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FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5621
INFO RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 1530
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 0170
RUEHNJ/AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA 0184
RUEHBP/AMEMBASSY BAMAKO 0028
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS 0857
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 0974
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT 0918
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 6171

UNCLAS TRIPOLI 001030

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR S/CT AND NEA/MAG

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SUBJECT: LIBYA: 2009 COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM

REF: STATE 109980

¶1. (U) The United States rescinded Libya's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism in June 2006. Libya renounced terrorism and weapons of mass destruction in 2003 and has continued to cooperate with the United States and the international community to combat terrorism and terrorist financing.

¶2. (U) On July 20, Malian President Amadou Toumani Toure confirmed to the Malian press that Libya, Algeria, and Mali planned to coordinate military and intelligence efforts to fight security threats linked to al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in the Sahel-Saharan region.

¶3. (U) In November 2007, Egyptian cleric and al-Qa'ida (AQ) leader Ayman al-Zawahiri announced a merger between AQIM and the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG). In an audiotape, al-Zawahiri urged AQ fighters to topple the Government of Libya, describing Muammar al-Qadhafi as an "enemy of Islam" and criticizing the 2003 decision to renounce WMD and terrorism. In late September, six leading members of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, being held in the Abu Salim prison, issued a document renouncing violence and claiming to adhere to a more sound Islamic theology than that of Al Qaeda and other jihadist organizations. The 417-page, Arabic-language document, entitled "Revisionist Studies of the Concepts of Jihad, Verification, and Judgment of People," was the product of a two-year reconciliation project between the Government of Libya and the LIFG, facilitated by the Qadhafi Development Foundation. The authors state that "The lack of religious knowledge, whether it was a result of an absence of 'ulama' (religious scholars) or the neglect of people in receiving it and attaining it, or due to the absence of its sources, is the biggest cause of errors and religious violations."

¶4. (U) In the text, the authors directly challenge al-Qa'ida, addressing the recantation to "anyone who we might have once had organizational or brotherly ties with." The document gives detailed interpretations of the "ethics and morals to jihad," which include the rejection of violence as a means to change political situations in Muslim majority countries whose leader is a Muslim and condemns "the killing of women, children, the elderly, monks/priests, wage earners, messengers, merchants and the like." It claims that "The reduction of jihad to fighting with the sword is an error and shortcoming." According to press and government sources, at least 144 former LIFG members and 60 members of other jihadist groups have been released from prison after completing this rehabilitation effort.

¶5. (U) On March 23, a foreign embassy in Tripoli recommended that travelers avoid the cities of Ghadames and Ghat on the

Libya-Algeria border. The Ministry cited Libyan authorities speaking of "an increasing threat of terrorism" and "risk of abduction" due to "heightened political tensions in the Arabic or Islamic world."

16. (U) On August 14, 2008 Libya and the United States signed a comprehensive claims settlement agreement to provide compensation to claimants in both countries who allege the other country's responsibility in incidents causing injury or death. Included in the settlement agreement are claims stemming from the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 in Lockerbie, Scotland, and the 1986 bombing of the La Belle nightclub in Berlin.

CRETZ